

birds than the flamingo, and birds with more brilliant plumage, but no other large bird is so brightly coloured, and no other brightly-coloured bird is so large. When to these more superficial attractions is added the fact that little or nothing has hitherto been known of the nesting habits of this singular bird, one may, in a measure at least, realise the intense longing of the naturalist, not only to behold a flamingo city, but at the same time to lift the veil through which the flamingo's home life has been but dimly seen. Nearly forty pages are devoted to the lifting of this veil for the reader, and the account is illustrated by more than a score of pictures of the birds at and on their nests, and of the nests, eggs and the young in various stages; included among these are two beautiful coloured photographs of the adult birds, in one of which they are seen feeding their young in the nest.

It is quite impossible to find space even to enumerate all the contents of this charming book, but Florida, Bahama, the western prairies, California, and many other localities were visited by the author, and are here described. Lastly, we have a chapter on his impressions of English bird-life; and the impressions of such an experienced bird-man are distinctly valuable and informing, and will be read with the greatest interest by our field ornithologists. We cannot enter into them widely here. As he approached the coast of Wales the "boreal" birds he saw about the stacks and islands of Wales afforded convincing evidence of high latitude, and, at the same time, an admirable illustration of the faunally composite character of English bird-life, types Americans are accustomed to consider representative of northern and southern life-zones finding in England congenial surroundings. Unlike some visitors, the author was not too late to hear the nightingale; he was disappointed at first with the song of the skylark, but before leaving England found himself listening to it with increasing pleasure. None of the birds seen from the train impressed him more than the peewit. We read:

"The bird's size, form, and colours, its grace of carriage on the ground, and dashing, erratic, aerial evolutions, give it high rank as an attractive part of any avifauna; while its abundance, in spite of the demand which places thousands of its eggs on the market annually, is inexplicable."

This is all true, though most of the eggs come from the Continent; but a bird which can furnish Mr. Chapman with "a brand new sensation in bird-life" must be something we ought to be proud of.

The author visited various parts of England, and many of our famous sea-bird haunts. His pictures of these places (including one of Selborne) are delightful, and everything he has written about our avifauna is well worth reading. It is satisfactory to read that birds are more abundant here than they are in North America. The book is very full of illustrations, and they are excellent—far better than most of the photographs of this kind. But the heavily leaded paper on which it is printed makes it simply too heavy to hold without actual weariness!

O. V. A.

EXOTERIC PHILOSOPHY.

- (1) *In the Abstract*. By N. Alliston. Pp. 156. (London: Swan Sonnenschein and Co. Ltd., 1909.) Price 2s. 6d.
- (2) *Progressive Creation: a Reconciliation of Religion with Science*. By Rev. H. E. Sampson. In two vols. Vol. i., pp. xii+484; vol. ii., pp. vi+517. (London: Rebman, Ltd., 1909.) Price 21s. net.
- (3) *Progressive Redemption*. By Rev. H. E. Sampson. Pp. xxiv+616. (London: Rebman, Ltd., 1909.) Price 12s. 6d. net.
- (4) *Scientific Idealism, or Matter and Force and Their Relation to Life and Consciousness*. By W. Kingsland. Pp. xxiii+427. (London: Rebman, Ltd., 1909.) Price 7s. 6d. net.

THESE books have this much in common, that none of them bears the academic hall-mark. Of the three writers, Mr. Alliston is the most ambitious of a precise logic. His book consists of a group of essays on such various topics as "The Planetary Distances," "Materialism," "The Value of Things." His criticism of the first law of motion is perhaps the most original effort in the book. He is dissatisfied with a formulation which assumes that rest and frictionless motion are alike constant; he holds that frictionless motion would cease as soon as the original force should be exhausted. Mr. Alliston admits that the law as stated must be considered practically adequate; he does not attempt to make any inference, dynamical or metaphysical, from his criticism; and the essential proof for this inconclusive result, the explanation of how an ideal unhindered velocity would be diminished, he has not provided. Mr. Alliston's essay on materialism is a clear and simple re-statement of now commonplace criticism; he does not, however, sufficiently realise the difficulty of finding a moral differentiation between materialism and a spiritualism which does not promise the conservation of individuality. The book is pleasantly written, and might be turned over with interest and profit by beginners in philosophy.

The authors of the other works placed at the head of this notice have each made a bold attempt to reach the final synthesis which is supposed to be the goal of philosophy. Mr. Sampson's interest is, in the main, theological; Mr. Kingsland's effort is more purely philosophical. The system of the former, though presented with much ability, will, it is to be feared, strike most people as fantastic. He starts from the failure of science to account for evolutionary breaks and "missing links." This failure suggests to him that the facts covered by the current theory of evolution represent an interruption rather than an integral part of the great order of true evolution. That true order is, it appears, a progressive creation of beings who pass by successive reincarnations from lower to higher types, culminating at last in perfect Godhood. A condition of its continuity is the preservation of purity of type, a condition violated by our "Adamic" ancestors, who inter-married with an inferior kind. Sin then entered the world, catastrophic physical changes occurred, and our history since has been a struggle towards the ancient

segregation, a "devolution." The incarnation of Christ was the essential effort of the whole Cosmos to redeem the earth. Mr. Sampson provides a cosmogony for the great spiritual order. The planetary circles and the zodiacal angles in their various relations define the home of the spirit in its various stages of development from the "atom" of original divine ætheric essence to the perfection of Deity. Into the elaboration of this scheme the author has worked much ingenious allegorisation of biblical story, and much mysterious symbolism from Astrologer and Rosicrucian. It is a not uninteresting and hence not unsuccessful attempt in mythology; at least it must appear so to all who do not possess, as Mr. Sampson seems to, the clue to the esoteric illumination of church and brotherhood.

Mr. Kingsland writes with much earnestness to show that truth, beauty, and goodness are only to be realised by man in his union with the Absolute, the one primordial substance, who is at once subject and object, whose nature can be expressed only in paradox, the eternal source and sustainer of all finite existence. We approach Him by ascent from plane to plane of existence—for He is essentially differentiated into planes variously approximating to His own self-sufficiency. For Mr. Kingsland individuality is an involution, and its extreme limit is physical determination; from that man is now evolving towards a realisation of the spiritual ego, which is the "universe" of many human personalities or incarnations. It again is but a phenomenal appearance of the spiritual form of humanity, the one "Divine Son," which is itself a phenomenon of the Absolute. Thus, though Mr. Kingsland professes a belief in immortality, it is necessarily an immortality in which individual experience is not preserved as individual. The temporal individuality must be merely a means for a higher life which transcends it; and, though the author may assert that we are at the same time ends, for the One is within us, this paradoxical conjunction has never satisfied man's moral demands for an end which is both personal and metaphysically genuine. The book is well written, and the exposition of recent scientific theory is admirable, but in the more metaphysical portions repetition is a great blemish.

OUR BOOK SHELF.

A Manual of Botany for Indian Forest Students. By R. S. Hole. Pp. xi+250+xxi+xx plates. (Calcutta: Government Printing Office, 1909.)

This work has been prepared primarily for the use of the pupils of the Imperial Forest School, Dehra Dun, in which establishment the author holds the post of forest botanist. The manual ought to prove a good text-book. It is quite up to date and is written in clear, concise language. Should a new edition be called for, and when one considers the object the work is intended to serve this will almost certainly be the case, the author will be well advised to treat systematic botany more fully than he has done in the edition before us. A compact synopsis of the natural families of plants to be met with in British India would be of great value as an aid to the student who will, when

he has left the forest school, have occasion to make use of the "Flora of British India," or of one or other of the regional Indian floras based on that fundamental work. The author might also consider the advisability of adding a glossary to the work. Such an addition, besides being of considerable utility in itself, would have the further advantage of enabling him to relieve the morphological part of the work of a certain amount of purely terminological matter and at the same time of allowing terminology itself to be treated somewhat more completely.

Another point to which the author's attention may be directed is the somewhat meagre character of the illustrations. It is, of course, true that, especially at the outset, there is some difficulty in providing for the full illustration of a work published by Government and prepared for the special purpose which underlies the one under notice. So long as it is understood that the work is merely intended to assist the student generally while he is at the forest school, the want of illustrations in company with the text is not likely to be greatly felt. But the work ought to have, and no doubt will have, a further use. Most students will carry the work away with them when they leave the school, and will find frequent occasion in after life to refer to it and refresh their memories. It is then that the need for good illustrations, which help to restore faded ideas and their associations, will be most acutely felt.

In directing attention to these points we would, however, desire it to be understood that no reflection is intended either on the author or on his work as it stands; what appeals to us in making them is rather a purpose that the work, modified as suggested, is calculated to fulfil than the purpose which, as the author explains, it is intended to serve. That it should serve this latter and narrower purpose well we do not doubt, and Mr. Hole is to be congratulated on the presentation of a useful and serviceable manual.

The Light of Egypt, from recently discovered Pre-dynastic and Early Christian Records. By R. de Rustafjaell. Pp. x+169. (London: Kegan Paul and Co., Ltd., 1909.) Price 10s. 6d. net.

MR. DE RUSTAFJÆLL'S book is a curious mixture, as its title shows. It consists chiefly of a description of various Egyptian objects, some apparently owned by the author (though this is not made quite clear), others bought by him and sold later to the British Museum. These objects are illustrated by fine photographs. They are strung together by means of a general talk compiled by the author from various authorities, which is intended to give an idea of the "light" shed by Egypt upon early civilisation. So far, so good, and the work is not badly done; but the author also launches out into one or two theories of his own, which are hazardous. We may instance his supposed discovery of limestone "vessels" of "Palæolithic" age found with (undoubted) Palæolithic flints on the Theban plateaux. These objects are not artefacts at all, but merely either the hard matrices of flint nodules or else weathered siliceous masses. They are common enough on any Egyptian *gebel* of rough stones. Mr. de Rustafjaell has discovered nothing here. The translation by Mr. Crum of the Coptic manuscript sold by Mr. de Rustafjaell to the British Museum, and included by him in his book, is interesting. The Nubian manuscript also originally obtained by Mr. de Rustafjaell, to whom Mr. Griffiths sends a summary description of it, has already been published in facsimile by Dr. Budge for the Trustees of the British Museum. It is of great importance linguistically.